



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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<http://ct.gov/dmv>



Testimony of Department of Motor Vehicles Acting Commissioner Judeen Wrinn

Environment Committee Public Hearing
March 1, 2019

House Bill [6637](#) AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVASIVE SPECIES STAMP FOR THE OPERATION OF A MOTORBOAT ON THE INLAND WATERS OF THE STATE.

Good morning Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco and members of the Environment Committee. Thank you for giving the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) the opportunity to testify with respect to Committee Bill 6637. The DMV supports the concept of this bill. The bill as currently drafted does not outline how the program would actually work within current staffing levels and appropriations. For those reasons, the agency is opposed to HB 6637.

This proposal seeks to prevent and respond to infestations of aquatic invasive species that negatively impact water quality, recreational use, environmental health and property values through a user-fee-based approach.

The bill as written is specifically focused on Connecticut resident and non-resident boaters who intend to operate or allow a vessel to be operated on inland waters of the state. The DMV has four primary concerns with our ability to fulfill the responsibilities outlined:

1. There is no way for DMV to know if the boat will be used on inland waters, coastal waters or elsewhere. DMV must assume that the state would require boaters to provide an attestation of their intentions when registering the vessel in order to make this work. Another option not currently available would be to require all boat registration renewals to be performed on-line where the digital signature attestation of intent to operate on inland waters is captured electronically and payment made without human intervention. Otherwise, a manual process would be performed by employees taking them away from other tasks where customer wait times will increase.
2. The bill also specifies that non-residents would be charged a fee. DMV has no way to identify non-residents who may intend to operate or allow a vessel to be operated on inland waters of the state. Nor would non-residents have a reason to know they should interact with CT DMV.
3. The DMV has no ability to monitor compliance with this attestation and expects that this responsibility would reside with the appropriate law enforcement agencies who enforce Connecticut's boating statutes, regulations and Federal navigational laws.

4. The proposed bill is not detailed enough to provide the committee with an estimated impact to the DMV. There would certainly need to be changes made to the IT system and if the assumptions stated above are correct, DMV estimates that could require approximately 6-9 months of planning, programming and testing from the date that the bill is approved. Funding would also be required for the Invasive Species Stamp and the subsequent mailing of that stamp after the registration renewal has been paid.

If DMV is required to accept registration renewals in-person or via mail, the DMV anticipates a need for additional staff to process the fee and stamp. Currently, 91% of vessel renewals are sent through the mail and processed by DMV's vendor, requiring no intervention from DMV staff.

In summary, if the assumptions noted above are accurate, the DMV is concerned about its ability to fully perform these new responsibilities. For those reasons, DMV is opposed to this bill.

Thank you for considering DMV's testimony opposed to Committee Bill 6637.